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NOTES ON KLUGE'S AND WEIGAND'S
ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARIES

I

1. ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF MODERN ENGLISH *Awl*

On *Ahle* '*an ein Heft befestigter stählerner Stachel zum Vorstechen bei Lederarbeit*' the 5th edition of *Weigand* has this to say: "Aus mhd. *âle*, ahd. *âla* f.; dazu ndl. *aal*, ags. *æl* f. (*daneben âwel*, engl. *awl*), an. alr m. '*Ahle*.' Eine Weiterbildung zeigt ahd. *alansa* (*daher schweiz.-schwäb. Alse*), vgl. frz. *alêne* aus *alesne* und ndl. *els* f. '*Ahle*.' Verglichen wird aind. *ārā* f. '*Pfriem, Ahle*,' lit. *ila*, preuss. *yla*, lett. *ilens* '*Ahle*.' In this account several statements need correction. In the first place, as the NED very properly points out, the length of vowel in the Old Germanic languages is by no means established. Old High German *alansa*, *alunsa*¹ speaks for OHG. *ala*, MHG. *ale*. As to Old English, the corresponding word has undoubtedly the vowel short and its gender is just as undoubtedly masculine, as Napier has emphasized. Nowhere is there any basis for the assumption of feminine gender and the forms recorded are *æl*, *eal*, *al*. The latter resulted in *an alle* (1382, Wyclif Exodus XXI. 6); the edition of 1388 has *a nal*, *an al*. This spelling varied later with *aul* (1607, Topsell, Four-footed Beasts 144), *awl*, (1727, Swift, Gulliver II VI.145) and has now become the established spelling, so as to distinguish it from the adjective *all* with which it perfectly coincides in pronunciation. The spelling *awl* has given rise to misconnecting the word with OE. *âwel*, *âwul* with which it has nothing whatever to do as I have pointed out in *Anglia* some years ago, and I am happy to say the noted linguist, Prof. Evald Lidén of Göteborg fully agrees with me. In the first place, OE. *âwel* is never used to interpret Latin *subula*; it glosses either *fuscina* or *harpago* or *tridens* or *ungula* or *uncus*. In the second place, OE. *âwel* could never have resulted in modern *awl*. Ernest Zupitza, in his *Germanische Gutturale* page 63, realized that and therefore assumed the *a* of OE. *âwel* as being short. But his assumption is shown to be wrong by the fact that the OE. word appears, in accordance with a well-known phonetic law, as *owel* in early Middle English,

¹ Cp. NED. sub *alsene* and *elsin*.

whence the *oules* of Chaucer in the Sompner's Tale 22, *With fleischhok or oules To ben yclawed*. The NED brings this quotation forwards as proof in the word history of *awl*, but it has as little place there as the Ælfric gloss 316 fascinula *awul* or the quotation from the Legend of St. Katherine 2206 *Tuhen hire tittes up of hire breoste. wið eawies of irne* or the quotation from Owl and Nightingale 80, *Thi bile is . . . scharp and hoked, Right so an owl that is crooked*. These quotations belong under *oul* which is wrongly designated as an obsolete spelling of *awl*; it is the legitimate development of OE. *āwel*, *āwul*, which is just as wrongly designated as "variant" of OE. *æl*, *al* "not accounted for." It is an altogether different word. It is radically connected with Latin *vellere* whose root, according to Walde, is *uel-s* and its meaning is that of 'evulsor,' *ā*-being OE. prefix whose function is about the same as that of Latin *ex*. Its OHG. congener I find in *ar-uuel-z-an* 'evellere, eruere,' with which I think *uualza* 'pedica' is closely connected. If so, the radical idea of the word is ('foot) catcher.' What connection there is between OHG. *aruuelzan* 'evellere' and *aruuelzan* 'evolvere,' that is a question I expect to deal with at some later time. In the mean while I insist that OE. *āwel*, *āwul*, *āwol* has no standing in an etymological discussion of modern English *awl*, which is the legitimate phonetical development of OE. *æl*, *al* 'subula'; the development is on a par with that of *æl*, *eal* 'omnis' to modern *all* and *smæl* 'gracilis' to modern *small*. When E. Zupitza l.l. tried to make out the *a* of OE. *āwel* must have been short, he overlooked the controverting fact that in a MS. of Ælfric's Grammar preserved in the Worcester Cathedral Library, designated W by Julius Zupitza, and assigned by him to the 12th century, the fascinula *awel* of the original reads fascinula *owel* and, significantly, is followed by *uncinus hoc*; the gloss is printed in Wright-Wücker 548.²⁰ If Zupitza Junior's assumption were true, the *a* of the original would have appeared as *a* also here. That it appeared as *o* is plain indication of the length of the vowel. For the scribe of this MS. almost invariably has changed the long *a*'s of his original to *o*, a clear proof that at the time he wrote the transition of long OE. *a* to Middle English *o* had already started. This phonetical change of OE. *āwel* to ME. *owel* is further testified to by a vocabulary of the 15th century, preserved in the Trinity College

Library of Cambridge. According to WW. 576,¹⁵ it explains Latin-Greek *creagra* by "*anglice an owel*." This coincides with the explanation given in a metrical vocabulary of the 15th century, preserved in MS. Harl. 1002: according to WW. 626,⁷ over *creagra* is written *nowle* which, of course, is—*an owle*. From this evidence it is safe to conclude that the initial vowel of OE. *āwel* was undoubtedly long. Had it survived, it would be now represented by *oul* or *oule* or *owle*, never by *awl*.

II

OE. *Scinn* 'SKIN' = EARLY MOD. ENGLISH *Shin*.

In the 7th edition and, if I am correctly informed, also in the 8th edition of his etymological dictionary Kluge has this to say on *schinden*, MHG. *schinden*, OHG. *scintan*. 'to skin, peel, maltreat': *Denominativ zu einem verlorenen ahd. N. *SCIND* 'Fell, Haut,' *das nach anord. SKINN (s. Schinnen) N. 'Haut, Fell, Pelz, Leder' für das Ahd. vorausgesetzt werden darf. Engl. SKIN aus spätag. SCINN. ist nord. Lehnwort des 10. Jarhhs. (angels. SCI müsste im Engl. SHI werden). Germ. SCINȒA aus vorgerm. SCÉNTO-* wird verglichen mit *bret. SCANT 'Fischschuppe' von Loth, Rev. Celt. XIV 194.*" Here I miss in the first place the reference to the masculine *Schund* 'trash' which later on is mentioned as '*junge Bildung zu schinden, eigtl. wohl 'Unflat der Kotgruben.'*' In the second place, the statement ought to have been made in this connection that *schinden* has partially passed over into the strong conjugation as witnessed by the past participle *geschunden* which has its par in the p. p. *skun* of vulgar English speech. As to late OE. *scinn* being a loan from ON. *skin*, it is true enough that the *scynn* occurring in the OE. Chronicles² has been taken over from the Norse. Also *berascinn* once met with in Bishop Leofric's Charter of 1050–1073 (*Earle, Landcharters, etc., p. 250 = Thorpe, Diplomatarium Anglicum, p. 429*²⁷) may come from that source. And from it, no doubt, has sprung modern English *skin*. But that there also was a native OE. *scinn* which resulted in early modern English *shin*

² Bosworth-Toller having failed to book the word, it will be worth while to transcribe here the whole passage from Earle's edition 1865, p. 212, ad annum 1075 (MS.D): *Hwæt þa se cyngc Malcolm. and his sweostor Margareta. geafon hī myccla geofa. and manega gærsama. and eallon his mennan on scynnan mid þælle betogen. and on merðerne pylecon. and grāscynnene. and hearma scynnene, and on þællon. and on gylde nan faton and on seolfrenan.*

and was gradually superseded by the Norse intruder, is a fact I drew Prof. Brights' attention to some three years ago and submit now to the general public: In the collection of glosses preserved in MS Cleopatra A III (Brit. Mus.) there occurs, according to Wright-Wülcker I. 427, 27, *imens. cinn*=hymen *scinn* (Servius Verg. Aen. IV. 99), with which compare the gloss in Cod. Voss. lat. fol. 24 lf. 87 recto 3⁴⁷ *ymen membranum* (Leyden University Library). From this native *scinn* sprang early modern English *schyn*, *shyne* which is spelt in the French fashion *chyn* in the English glosses on the Norman French of Walter de Biblesworth treatise in Wright Voc. I. 149¹⁵: *Homme et femme unt* ^{hyd. the chyn} _{la peel}. That already in the first quarter of the 14th century³ the native *shyn* had a competitor in the Norse *skyn*, *skine* is proved by the reading *skine* for *chyn* in the Chambridge MS. The same competition is witnessed to in the 15th century by what we read in the Catholicon Anglicum p. 177a as English explanation of Latin *nembris*=*nebris*: *an Hart-skyn* (MS A: *a Hartshyne*). The native word is used in a 15th century rendering of Latin *matrix*, WW. 752³.

Hec munda } a *schyn* that a *schyld*

Hec matrix } is *conseyd in*,

while the Catholicon Anglicum, p. 342a, prefers for the same purpose the Norse loan-word:

skyn y' y' *chylde* is lapped in y' *moder wame*, himen, matrix. Also the modern *skinner* appears still in his native garb as *shinnere* in a vocabulary of c1425, preserved in the Brit. Museum MS Reg. 17, C. XVII, fol. 21, according to WW. 650³⁶, *Hic pelliparius A' schyinnere*. In Middle English I have, so far, not been able to find a trace of the native OE. *scinn*, unless the *shindle* of Ancr. R. 186 is connected with it. The NED s.v. states that its origin and precise meaning is unknown. I here give the whole passage: *Nis þet child fulitowen þet schreped agean. & bit upon þe zerde* (MS Cleopatra CVI Cotton). For *schreped* MS Titus DXVIII Cott. offers the variant *schindled* which I suggest would go back to an OE. derivative from *scinn* 'cutis,' **scin(d)lian* 'decorticare.'

OTTO B. SCHLUTTER.

Daytona Beach, Fla., March 1919.

³ Provided the NED's date, c1325, for W. de Biblesworth's treatise is correct.